

Rome 21st March 1895

My dear Maria

Yours of the 11th inst^h gives me the good news that you have broke the neck of the winter so severe in all parts even here & that write on a fine sunny day - but that you have been at home from time which must have been very tiresome

Here we begin to be better off & have had some fine days - the trees are all in blossom or rather out by this time

A sad incident has befallen us the sister of Dr. Valeriani died lately - as she was fine strong woman of 63 it was a painful surprise, but she never took medicine by any chance & a costipation coming on, no medicine would have effect & in 2 days she ceased - The Doctor is much affected by this sudden loss but the number of deaths in Rome is great

I am occupied in aiding an American Lady
who has a school of Roman children, in all
76 - She educates & even feeds them - Just now
she is preparing a Bazaar in my house &
the Theatre & we are all giving something
to this worthy object - I am glad to say that
a fashion has sprung up to educate the Poor Roman
children & these fairs are frequent occurrence
the children have great talent & no doubt
twas the Pops greatest mistake not educating
the people - for this he is punished & is losing all
no doubt the Romans would have been faithful
to him had they been educated - for education
is our second & better nature - not 1 in 10 could
either read or write - In this the King has a
great advantage & will beat the Pope

Great things are going on by the admirers
of Keats

Both Americans & English are showing me
great attention for my friendship to Keats, even
now the admiration of his works is greater
than ever. This a great gratification to me
me & a consolation in my declining years

You are right that I should not enter
into these busy undertakings, for I have not
strength - I was asked to give a lecture on
Keats but I declined as my nerves would not
stand it - the Tomb has been well repaired
by General Sir Vincent Eyre

Often lately I have been visited by friends
of my children who are anxious to know their
father & show me a word of kindness - This is
a great enjoyment to me that my chicks
come "up to the scratch"

I never go out in the evenings, but sometimes
go to an early dinner & get on well, walking
home

you will be surprised & amused when I tell
you that I am your Debtor in the sum of 5 £
for the letter of Keats which I have sold to Sir
Charles Dilke for that amount & am only waiting
for a 5 £ bank note to send you cut in half - now
do accept this as it will serve to buy the "piddle
paddle" that a Lady is already in want of

you will be glad to know that the Americans
are very gracious to me & tomorrow I am
invited to meet at dinner some twenty ladies &
gentlemen admirers of Keats & one of them has just
bought my picture of the Poet's grave

24 March we have a return of the cold, what
all pleasant

As you are amused with my letters, here I give you another $\frac{1}{2}$ sheet - you have not seen poor Tom since I map, but I will conclude that he is doing well & with this fine weather he'll get out, what & if he by mistake walks over to pay me a visit - he'd better not for he might frighten me & I might not have any dinner ready for him!!

There's a very pretty custom on my Saints day of S. Joseph I am presented with a bunch of flowers & this time (19th) two splendid nosegays were sent me & my dear old ^{P.} Appella in the mountains sent me $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen of delicious wine, with the hope that I may see a hundred of these festive days

I am glad to be able to assure you that I am ^{thing} very comfortable in my house, my friends do every thing to make me "at home" & the doctor is excellent company at all times - My love to all particularly dear Tom

Your loving brother
Joe